

# The Portland Observer Sustainability



## 'Green' Degree Program Opens

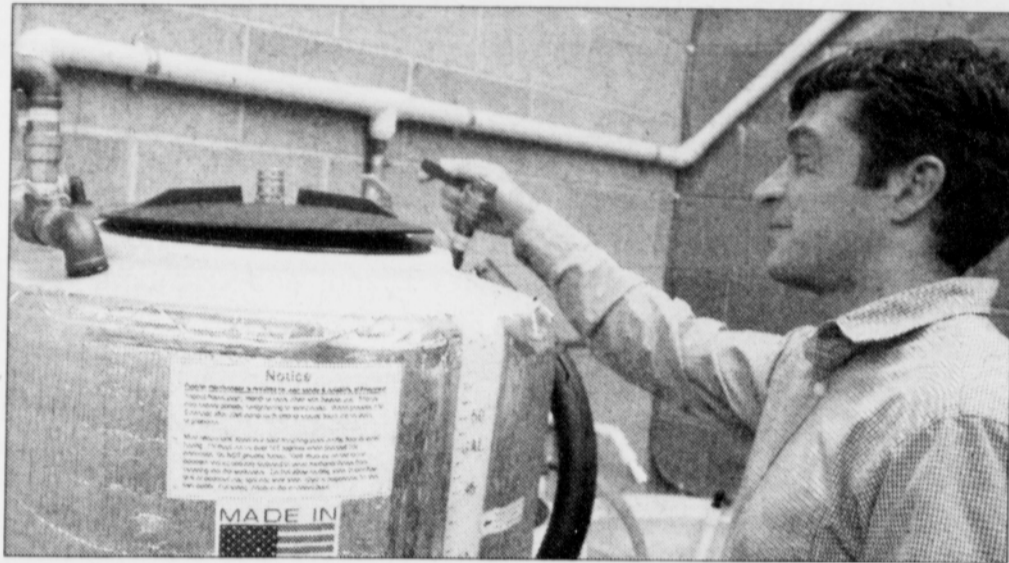
For careers in sustainable engineering

Starting this fall, Portland Community College's Civil and Mechanical Engineering Technology Program will offer a new option for students wanting a career in sustainable engineering.

A student pursuing the Green Technology and Sustainability Option will take courses in renewable energy, environmental sociology and introduction to geographic information systems that emphasize environmental skills.

In addition, students get hands-on work performing lab tests for water quality and producing biodiesel from the waste oil from the Sylvania Campus cafeteria. All of these classes are required for a Civil or Mechanical Engineering Technology associate's degree with a Green Technology and Sustainability Option, which is based at PCC's Sylvania Campus in southwest Portland.

With the emphasis on green technology development in the American Recovery and Revitalization Act of 2009, the program's faculty expects even a greater opportunity in the marketplace for its graduates



Portland Community College instructor Greg Gerstner inspects the bio diesel tank that creates fuel on campus from discarded cooking oil.

in sustainability fields.

"We're very excited about the Green Technology and Sustainability Option," said Greg Gerstner, engineering instructor. "The three courses will not only add technical acumen, but will address the importance of environmental responsibility."

This isn't the first green venture by the Civil and Mechanical Engineering Technology Program. Since the early 1990s, courses in thermodynamics, HVAC, energy production, energy management, equipment design and solar energy have been offered.

In the 1980s, faculty worked on the design of the solar hot water system for a campus swimming pool. In 1995, they built a straw bale build-

ing with solar panels, which was a research project to demonstrate that this kind of construction was a practical method in Oregon's damp climate. This solar lab facility still stands today and is off the grid.

"Over the years, instrumentation has been added, and two solar hot water systems are almost complete, so that the facility can be used to supplement our thermodynamics and fluid mechanics courses," Gerstner added. "It's just another way we are tying green and sustainable methods into our courses for the benefit of the community."

For more information on the program, visit [pcc.edu/programs/civil-engineering](http://pcc.edu/programs/civil-engineering).

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## Energy Savings Program Expands

Oregon has reached a milestone under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act - completing weatherization work for more than 30 percent of the homes the state planned to weatherize this year.

The U.S. Department of Energy reported last week that Oregon has weatherized more than 1,750 homes under the Recovery Act as of June 30.

As a result of the progress, the

state will now have access to an additional \$19 million in Recovery Act weatherization funding to continue providing energy efficiency services to Oregon's low-income families.

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**Tickets: [www.portlandonline.com/bps/builditgreen](http://www.portlandonline.com/bps/builditgreen) | 503-823-5431**

## Northwest Voice For Christ Ministries

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